REMARKS/ ARGUMENTS

Status Of The Claims

In the Office Action mailed October 31, 2007, Claims 1, 3, and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Voss* in combination with *Nonomura* and *Kawai*; Claims 4-6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Voss* in combination with *Nonomura* and *Kawai* as applied to Claims 1, 3, and 8, and further in view of *Akram*; and, Claim 7 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Voss* in combination with *Nonomura* and *Kawai* as applied to Claims 1, 3, and 8, and further in view of *Austin*.

By this reply, Applicant traverses the rejection of the claims and implores the Examiner to reconsider the rejections of the pending claims.

Claim Rejections Under § 103(a)

It is clearly evident that none of the relied upon prior art—including *Nonomura* and *Kawai*—discloses electrodes that are curved.

With respect to *Nonomura*, the Office Action alleges that *Nonomura's* anodes follow the outline of the vehicle body in an approximately parallel manner. This conclusion is apparently based on *Nonomura's* electrode plates being said to be "arranged on a side wall and a bottom wall of the electrodeposition tank." See *Nonomura*, col. 2, lines 37-39. However, the distance between the electrode plates and the vehicle body depends on the form of the electrode plates and of the kind in which they are arranged—which is not detailed in *Nonomura*. In any event, a curved surface is not disclosed.

With respect to *Kawai*, it discloses an electrode having a U-shaped profile that "follows" the contour of the object to be coated in a "parallel" manner, but this is simply due to the fact that the object shown is a rectangle—which in practice is not the case. And again, a curved surface is not disclosed.

Both *Nonomura* and *Kawai* fail to recognize the physical meaning and importance of having curved electrodes closely following the contour of the vehicle body. Applicant contends that the industry—and those of ordinary skill in the art—have thus far been satisfied with plane electrodes that consequently must deviate from the parallel-ness to the non-linear outline of a vehicle body. Furthermore, making plane electrodes is very inexpensive whereas making curved

electrodes is costly. Moreover, plane electrodes can be used for coating all types of vehicle bodies whereas curved electrodes need to be individually formed for the specific shape of vehicle body.

It is clearly evident that the prior art has failed and continues to fail to recognize and/or appreciate the advantages in the quality and/or the resultant coating of the claimed invention—as previously stated by Applicant and also as disclosed within the specification, most notably at page 3, lines 5-16—which outweigh the increased complexity and associated costs of the claimed present invention as compared to that which is already known. Thus, because these advantages exceed the expectations of the prior art, the present invention as claimed is not obvious in view thereof.

Applicant's invention as claimed in independent Claim 1 requires—at least—an anode having a curved surface. Because the cited prior art, alone or in combination, fails to disclose, teach, or suggest at least a curved anode surface, Applicant respectfully submits that independent Claim 1—as well as all claims ultimately depending thereon, i.e., Claims 3-8—is in condition for allowance and requests the rejections to the pending claims be withdrawn and the claims be allowed to issue.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments and remarks, the Applicant respectfully requests that all objections and rejections be removed and all pending claims be passed to issue.

Applicant believes that no additional fees are required, however if any fees are required, they may be paid out of our Deposit Account No. 50-0545.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dated: December 28, 2007

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop AF Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on December 28, 2007.

Yolanda Solis